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Edited by C. R. Boxer
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The Journal of
MAARTEN HARPERTSZOON TROMP
Anno 1639

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"Bestevaer"
(from the etching in the possession of the author)
Engraving by Walter Hild, 1901.

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Translated and Edited
by
C. R. BOXER



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To
THE MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER

Horas non numero nisi serenas

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*This map is available for download from www.cambridge.org/9781107536838

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P R E F A C E

At this present time when the history of the seventeenth century is being re-written, much has been done by English writers to reveal the true story of our Navy under the Stuarts, and to restore to their rightful place the names of several forgotten naval worthies of that period. But there is still room for a work dealing with our redoubtable opponents and neighbours on the other side of the North Sea. It must surely interest students of British naval history to know what manner of men they were who once burnt our ships in the Medway—to say nothing of waging against us the three most stubbornly contested maritime wars which this world has ever seen.

This Journal, which is now printed for the first time, affords us a remarkable insight into the life at sea of “Jan Maat” who was our Jack Tar’s “opposite number”. Not only this, but we also get from it an interesting portrait of the great Admiral Maarten Tromp, one of the noblest and most sympathetic figures in the richly-crowded canvas of Holland’s Golden Century. Finally, together with the little-known Portuguese and English sources which are used in the text, the Journal gives us a vivid picture of one of the most fateful episodes of that romantic age.

C. R. B.

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THE SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF THE CAMPAIGN OF 1639

The increasing interest shown by English historians in naval matters would seem to afford a valid reason for the publication of the journal kept by Tromp on board his flagship during the fateful months of 1639 culminating in the destruction of a Spanish Armada in the Downs.

It is true that the story of the ill-fated Armada of 1639 has already been ably told by Dr M. G. De Boer in his work—*De Armada van 1639* (Groningen 1911), but although he made use of nearly all that had appeared in print on the affair—whether in Holland, Spain, France or England—up to the time that he wrote, yet there were some obscure but important contemporary sources which escaped his vigilant eye, whilst naturally a good deal of water has flowed under the historical bridge since then. Hence I trust that the present work will serve to show not only that it amplifies Dr De Boer's study, but also that it amends and corrects it in some important particulars, albeit I do not differ from the general conclusions reached by my predecessor in this same field. The materials which I have drawn upon, will be found summarised in the Bibliography at the end of the book, but it will be convenient here briefly to discuss the importance of the various works consulted and the method I have adopted.

In the first place, the materials on the Dutch side are naturally of most weight. The *Journal* itself (on which a detailed descriptive note is printed *infra*) was already used not only by Dr De Boer, but by the great naval historian De Jonge¹ and other writers. But although its existence was well known to students in Holland, nothing has appeared on it in English, and Dutch writers have confined themselves to extracts dealing with the outstanding events of the campaign, such as the battle of October 21st, and have rather slurred over the prosaic but

¹ *Het Nederlandsche Zeewezen*, Tweede druk, 1, pp. 268–372, Haarlem 1858.

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fundamentally important daily routine and dispositions of the fleet as described therein. Besides Tromp's *Journal*, we have the *Life* of his Vice-Admiral Witte de With, recently published for the first time by Captain S. P. L'Honoré Naber, R.N.N. (retd.),¹ which was written by De With's son-in-law as early as 1662. The journal of one of Tromp's captains, Zybrandt Barentsz Waterdrinker, was used by Aitzema² and is a valuable contemporary source, but the same cannot be said of the numerous pamphlets on the campaign, which possess in full measure that spiteful gossip in which that class of literature abounded.³ I have myself been unable to see the majority of these pamphlets, but as they were known to De Jonge and Dr De Boer, I presume that these two gentlemen have abstracted what there is of worth in them.

The Resolutions—both Secret and Open—of the States-General⁴ for the months of April-October are of course all-important, and have been used by De Jonge, De Boer and others. I was myself unable to see them, owing to lack of time, but Captain Naber kindly made a "Sommiere Inspectie" of the most important entries for September and October 1639, and all of those that he noted were already used by Arend in his *Geschiedenis des Vaderlands*.⁵ This little known but extremely valuable Dutch History is almost entirely composed from the Resolutions of the States-General and those of the States of Holland. As an instance of the author's thoroughness, it may be mentioned that the Resolutions of the States-General for every single day in September and October are cited in his book, as well as many of those of the States of Holland. In view of this it is obviously quite unnecessary for anyone to wade through these voluminous entries again, since Arend has worked this rich mine of information so thoroughly. The

¹ *'T Leven en Bedrijf van Vice-Admiraal de With*, Zaliger, MSS. Rijksarchief, Admiraliteitscolleges, XL, 1 and 9, printed in 1926 in the *Transactions of the Historical Society of Utrecht*.

² *Saken van Staet en Oorlogh*, II^e Deel, pp. 613-16, The Hague 1669.

³ Pamphletten Knutte. Nos. 4617-4632.

⁴ Manuscript in the Rijksarchief at The Hague.

⁵ Published at Amsterdam in 1874. I am indebted to Commander Warnsinck, R.N.N., for directing my attention to this invaluable work, and to Messrs Nijhoff at The Hague for the loan of a copy of the volume required, III^e Deel, v^e stuk.

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popular Dutch works of the period such as Van den Bos' *Leven der doorluchtigste Zeehelden* are only of value in so far as they have drawn upon the sources already quoted, and should be used with discrimination.

Finally, of Dutch works published since De Boer wrote his study, I have used Elias' *Schetsen uit de Geschiedenis van ons Zeewezen*,¹ various articles in the *Jaarverslagen* of the Netherlands Historical Shipping Museum² and Professor Blok's *Frederik Hendrik*,³ besides numerous other books for passing references which are quoted in the text. To those desirous of going somewhat deeper into the articles of Fruin,⁴ Ising⁴ and other Netherland historians on certain aspects of this campaign, I commend the work of De Boer. We now come to the Spanish side. Here I have confined myself to the invaluable Duro,⁵ whom De Boer has already utilised to the full. My chief contributions however are the Portuguese sources which I have drawn upon extensively. The narrative of Admiral da Costa Quintella⁶ was used by Duro and thence (second-hand) by De Boer, but both of these writers failed to realise that Quintella's narrative was merely a very concise—and not always quite accurate—*précis* of a much earlier Portuguese version written by a man who had been a participant in the events he describes. I refer to the *Epanaphoras de varia historia Portugueza* by Dom Francisco Manuel de Mello.⁷ The author, who flourished in the first half of the seventeenth century, was one of the most celebrated Portuguese of his time. An expert soldier who served with distinction in Flanders and elsewhere, a gifted statesman, a writer of no mean ability, and a seaman

¹ Published by M. Nijhoff, 1916–29. Five parts have already appeared. This compilation is especially valuable for the economic and administrative side of Dutch naval history.

² At Amsterdam, 1919–29. Articles by J. F. L. Balbian Verster.

³ Vol. xiii of the *Nederlandsche Historische Bibliotheek*, Amsterdam 1924.

⁴ *Verspreide Geschriften*, ix, and Nijhoff's *Bijdragen*, Nieuwe Reeks, iv, p. 99.

⁵ *Armada Española desde la Union de los Reynos de Castilla y de Aragón*, iv, Madrid 1898.

⁶ *Annaes da Marinha Portugueza*, II, Lisboa 1840.

⁷ I have to thank Professor Edgar Prestage, the leading authority on Dom Francisco Manuel, for the loan of an example of the second edition of 1676. This work is exceedingly scarce. The portion concerned is called *Epanaphora Belica* iv, *Conflito do Canal de Inglaterra*, Anno 1639, pp. 445–571.

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of considerable—if painful—experience,¹ he has left us the longest account of the whole expedition whether in manuscript or in print, and the very existence of this narrative was unknown to all others who have written on the campaign. Dom Francisco Manuel was in command of one of the regiments raised for service in Flanders; he was present at the assembly in La Coruña, and graphically describes the situation there when the French appeared on the scene. When the Armada finally sailed, he embarked in one of the ships of the Dunkirk squadron (which contingent he carefully describes), and participated in the actions of September 16th and 18th, of which he gives us a long account; and he was on board one of the ships which escaped to Dunkirk on September 21st. Although he may not have been present at the final drama on October 21st, he describes the battle, as well as the previous tortuous negotiations with England, at great length from trustworthy eyewitnesses. His impartiality is vouched for not only by his natural honesty and fairmindedness, but also by the circumstances under which he wrote; for although he had served in the Spanish Armada, yet at the time his work appeared in its final form,² his country was at war with Spain, so he had no cause to be unduly partial to her. But his account is valuable for another reason, and this is his meeting with Tromp at Falmouth in 1641. On this occasion De Mello took the opportunity to ask Tromp many questions on the battles of two years before, and we therefore have several observations on his actions from Tromp himself, and these are especially welcome in filling up the very meagre details in Tromp's own laconic journal. Incidentally they also provide a complete and convincing refutation of the scandalous aspersions cast on Tromp in the *Life* of Witte de With—refutations which it has not been hitherto possible to produce

¹ He was in one of the ships lost in the disastrous shipwreck of the Portuguese Armada on the French coast in 1627 (the greatest blow Portugal received after the death of King Sebastião in Morocco in 1578) and took part in the even more catastrophic expedition of 1639. His account of the shipwreck of 1627 forms pp. 150–269 of his *Epanaphora Tragica*.

² He drew up his first Relation immediately after the events, by order of the Cardinal-Infant in 1639. This, together with a subsequent one of *circa* 1640, was seized by the Spaniards on the outbreak of war with Portugal in 1640. The dedication of the final Relation (to Francisco de Mello e Torres, the Ambassador in England) is dated at Espinhel, Sept. 30th, 1659.

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from the Dutch side. I have made copious extracts from the *Epanaphora* throughout this work, and those desirous of consulting the original for further details will shortly be able to do so in the forthcoming annotated edition of Dom Francisco Manuel's works which the great Lusitanian scholar Professor Prestage is bringing out at Coimbra.

With regard to the English side. The *Calendar of State Papers*¹ and that of the *Clarendon Papers*² have already been extensively drawn on by De Boer, but I think I may claim to have embodied some new material from the former. Almost at the same time as De Boer published his work in Holland, those of T. W. Fulton³ and the Rev. G. Edmundson⁴ appeared in England, and I have availed myself of these books, which De Boer was unable to do. In later years, the *Life of Sir Henry Mainwaring* edited by G. E. Manwaring and W. G. Perrin for the Navy Records Society has proved invaluable to me, whilst the *Travels of Peter Munday*⁵ edited by Sir Richard Temple for the Hakluyt Society have also been laid under contribution. The most important English source, however, in my opinion, is the tract⁶ published by Peter White, who was Master of the English admiral's flagship, and saw and spoke with Tromp daily for a month. This source was quite unknown to Dr De Boer and to all Dutch historians.

Besides the French works already used by De Boer,⁷ I have made use of two very valuable books which have appeared since he wrote, namely Henri Malo's *Les Corsaires Dunkerquois et Jean Bart*, Paris 1912, and Charles de la Roncière's *Histoire de la Marine Française*, Paris 1920, both of which afford a good deal of new material.

The only German work I have used is the *Militärische Seetransporte von Spanien nach Flandern* of Dr Friedrich Graefe

1 *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1639 and 1639-1640.

2 *Clar. S.P.* I and II.

3 *The Sovereignty of the Sea*, London 1911.

4 *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry, 1600-53*, Oxford 1911.

5 Vol. IV, *Europe*, in Hakluyt Society, 2nd series, vol. LV.

6 *A great sea-fight... Narrative of the principal passages transacted in the Downs*, Anno 1639.

7 (a) *Lettres du Cardinal de Richelieu*; (b) *Correspondance de Henri d'Escoubleau de Sourdis*; (c) *Lettres, Mémoires et Négotiations du Comte d'Estrades*.

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in the German naval periodical *Marine-Rundschau* for January-March 1927, but as the author has studied all previous German works very thoroughly, for me to examine these again would only be redundant. To sum up, I may say that exclusive of what has been published since De Boer wrote his study in 1911, my chief sources have been Manuel de Mello on the Iberian side, Peter White on the English, and the *Journal* of Tromp itself on the Dutch side—all three extensive, contemporary and fair-minded.